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The hearth or stove was the focal point of the barely furnished living room. When winter came the small fires burned steadily, but slowly as though undernourished. For fuel, people in Dragalevtsy used small branches brought from the village forest up on the mountainside, though a few bought coal from the mine at Pernik. No longer did they burn cow dung. Older people of the family felt that fire was sacred because it could bring on great disasters; therefore, it should not be treated lightly. The aged would never think of spitting in the fire, and gravely deplored this disrespect of the young. This attitude is perhaps an ancient survival of the days when the Bulgarians were sunworshipers.

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The walls of the homes were pierced by comparatively few windows, which were small and were kept tightly shut during the winter to keep out the "dangerous" night air. The rest of the wall space was brightened somewhat by gaudy calendars decidedly patriotic in theme. The iron bedsteads or the heavy wooden beds which lined the walls contrasted strikingly with some homemade cradle or trundle bed reserved for the succession of young. A kneading trough stood near the door, usually covered to serve as a table. The only other table was a low circular *sofra* around which people ate seated on three-legged stools. I once asked a peasant:

"Why do all of your little stools have three legs instead of four?"

"Far back in the past people used such stools and so we use them also. And I guess they are easier to be made and also are cheaper; furthermore, some people think that they keep a better balance since on a three-legged stool there is one less leg to wear down and become uneven than would be the case with a four-legged stool."

I have not been able to discover any flaw in this example of peasant logic. The same woman once explained to me why the people use the *sofra,* which is two feet high:

"This height was chosen through the ages because if it were lower, people would have to sit on the dirty floor. If it were the height of a regular table such as people have in the taverns, the three-legged stools would be too short. Therefore, the height of our table and the height of our stools are intimately connected."